

STAT

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 783NATION
25 June 1983

GRAD SCHOOLS FOR DEFENSE A DILLER, A DOLLAR, AN N.S.C. SCHOLAR

ANDREW KOPKIND

In the Spring 1983 issue of *The Washington Quarterly*, a small-circulation academic journal with a discreet conservative bent, the eminent political scientist Robert E. Ward outlines an ambitious scheme of government funding, direction and control of virtually all important research in international studies in America. It is a brazen proposal to re-establish the shameful intimacy between the theoreticians and the practitioners of foreign policy that provided the intellectual basis for the disaster of Vietnam, and that was broken at the war's end. Ward blandly—innocently—gives his reasons for resuming the sordid affair, but it is not until the very last sentence of his long article that he lets his readers in on a little secret:

"I should note," he says coyly, "that an attempt to bring about the sort of federal-academic relationship that I have described is currently in process."

Of course Ward should note it; he should have headlined it, and warned his readers that the directorate he mentions is organized and ready to go, and that we could wake one morning soon and find that the national security apparatus in the White House and in academia has taken command of international studies in the land. The scheme would radically alter the distinction between the study of foreign affairs and the conduct of it, and produce far-reaching changes in American intellectual life.

Ward also might have noted that the idea is very much his own, that he was a principal author of the formal proposal, and that he has been planning, recruiting and lobbying for it for

several years. His latest draft was presented for approval to a select and sympathetic coterie of government officials, elite professors, intelligence operatives and military brass—the very types who would run the future directorate—at a conference held on April 28 in the Indian Treaty Room of the Old Executive Office Building in Washington.

Ward chaired that meeting with Richard S. Beal, a young Reaganaut from Brigham Young University who serves as the Administration's point man on the project, which the President is said to support. As they outlined it, the plan would have the President give the National Security Council, his in-house ministry of foreign affairs, some \$15 million or \$20 million (the figure is negotiable) to fund the major research projects in international studies. In this time of budget cutbacks and inflation-shrunk endowments, such sums would give the government effective control of the field.

The N.S.C. would oversee a deceptively complex structure of government and academic panels which would set the national agenda of subjects and perspectives in international studies; the apparatus would coerce scholars to "consult" with the intelligence and military services and it would make the results of researchers' work available to "interested federal agencies." Finally, it would undermine independent research in foreign affairs, which alone can produce alternative analyses and policies to the dominant ideology of imperial management.

It is not that the hundred-odd centers for area studies and international affairs on college campuses have been bastions of free thinking and radical scholarship. David Horowitz showed in a landmark study two decades ago that all the research centers save one or two had been set up by the great private foundations (Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller) with money pumped out of America's overseas empire—and were controlled by the pumpers, their heirs, their bankers, their lawyers and their academic mandarins in the court of corporate wealth.

The studies conducted in such centers (e.g., Harvard's Center for International Affairs, Berkeley's Institute of International Affairs and M.I.T.'s Center for International Studies) were always deeply informed by the nature and structure of control, but it was not until the beginning of the Vietnam era that the system was analyzed, exposed and challenged. The centers served as think tanks for counterinsurgency, counterrevolution and "nation building"—a code word for models of development that might be foisted on Third World countries to keep them securely within the American camp.

But the epic failure of American efforts in Vietnam discredited the think tanks and their thinking, encouraged younger scholars to pursue independent research and greatly diminished the capacity of government planners and their

CONTINUED